

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DPW-01 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 AID-05 IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00

/092 W

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R 190400Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7334

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

JCRC BARBERS PT HA

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2719

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, MILI, EAID, PFOR, LA, US

SUBJECT: LAO OFFICIALS REPEATS LINE ON MIA, US AID TO LPDR

REF A VIENTIANE 2705, B VIENTIANE 1711

1. LPDR FOREIGN MINISTRY DIRECTOR OF WESTERN AND PACIFIC
AFFAIRS SOMBAT CHOUNLAMANY RAISED SUBJECT OF MIA WITH EMBOFF
WHO CALLED ON HIM TO MAKE BOOK PRESENTATION. SOMBAT GOT AROUND
TO SUBJECT AFTER FIRST RAISING QUESTION OF US VETO OF SRV
ADMISSION TO UN, REPORTED REF A.

2. HE FOLLOWED LINE LPDR OFFICIALS HAVE FOLLOWED MANY TIMES
PREVIOUSLY, STATING THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR LPDR (AND SRV,
HE SAID) TO OBTAIN ANY INFORMATION ON MIA WHO MAY HAVE BEEN
DOWNED IN UNINHABITED AREAS AND THAT LAO WERE TOO BUSY WITH
RECONSTRUCTION OF THEIR COUNTRY TO PUT MAJOR EFFORT INTO SEARCH
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FOR MIA.

3. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT AT LEAST SOME OF DOSSIERS ON MIA WHICH HAD BEEN PASSED TO SOMBAT IN JULY, AS REPORTED REF B, APPARENTLY WERE SELECTED BECAUSE THEY WERE CASES OF MIA REPORTEDLY DOWNED NEAR INHABITED AREAS WHERE INFORMATION MIGHT BE EASIER TO OBTAIN.

4. SOMBAT THEN ASKED WHY US WAS SO CONCERNED WITH OBTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT MIA WHEN JAPANESE AND FRENCH HAD LOST MANY MORE DURING FIGHTING IN LAOS IN PREVIOUS YEARS BUT WERE CONTINUING TO GIVE AID TO LAOS WITHOUT PRESSING FOR INFORMATION ON THEIR MIA.(SOMBAT'S IDEAS ON JAPANESE AND FRENCH LOSSES IN LAOS ARE, OF COURSE, WILDLY INACCURATE.) EMBOFF REPLIED THAT AMERICAN PEOPLE HAD TRADITIONALLY WANTED TO KNOW FATE OF CASUALTIES NOT ONLY IN INDOCHINA WAR BUT IN WORLD WAR II AND OTHER WARS US HAD ENGAGED IN WHICH WAS OF HUMANITARIAN CONCERN PARTICULARLY TO MIA FAMILIES.

5. SOMBAT RESPONDED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD HUMANITARIAN CONCERN BUT THEN WENT ON TO REPEAT STANDARD LPDR LINE THAT WAY TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN LPDR AND US WAS TO DEAL POSITIVELY WITH EACH OTHER, PARTICULARLY BY US PROVIDING AID TO HEAL WOUNDS OF WAR IN LAOS. EMBOFF NOTED THAT U.S. LAW PRECLUDED AID TO THREE INDOCHINA COUNTRIES.
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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04 MAY 2006

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